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PATENT

EFFICIENTLY IDENTIFYING TELEVISION STATIONS IN A USER FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

TECHNICAL FIELD

5 The present invention relates to the field of broadcasting technology, and more particularly to allowing a user of a unit configured to receive television broadcast signals the ability to efficiently identify television stations in a user friendly environment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

10 Television broadcasting technology has improved tremendously since its inception. Today, television signals are broadcast on the airwaves through cables and via satellite. The number of television stations accessible today has increased from one to hundreds of stations. To select a program to view, many viewers may perform what is commonly referred to as "channel surfing" until they find a channel that has a desired program. Channel surfing may refer to the process of using the channel "+" or "-" button on a remote control to sequentially view each channel. However, 15 channel surfing may involve the television viewer spending an inordinate amount of time in searching for the desired channel.

20 Channel surfing may be avoided if the television viewer recalls the particular channel(s) airing the programs of interest. For example, suppose a television viewer desires to watch the news. Under the current technology, the television viewer may have to sequentially view each channel to find a station airing news or else recall the particular television channels that air news programs. However, the television viewer may not be able to recall which particular television channels air news programs. Furthermore, the television viewer may not know or be able to recall which television 25 channels air news programs at the particular time of day the viewer desires to watch the news. Furthermore, the television viewer may not know if unscheduled news

programs are airing. Subsequently, the television viewer's search for particular channels airing programs of interests may be inefficient and time consuming.

It would therefore be desirable for the television viewer to efficiently identify television stations of interest in a user-friendly environment.

SUMMARY

The problems outlined above may at least in part be solved in some embodiments by displaying folders of classifications where each folder may comprise indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations, e.g., CNN™, that a viewer may select in order to view that particular television station.

In one embodiment of the present invention, a method for identifying television stations in a user-friendly environment may comprise the step of an entertainment unit receiving broadcast signals for a plurality of television stations, e.g., ESPN™, CNN™. Furthermore, the broadcast signals may include tags for identifying a classification associated with each of the television stations broadcasted. A classification may refer to the type of broadcast, e.g., news, sports, soap operas, travel, cartoons, movies, etc., being broadcasted by that television station. The tags may further comprise content information associated with the television programs currently airing on the television stations broadcasted.

A determination may be made as to whether the received broadcast signals include tags with classification information, i.e., the classifications associated with each of the television stations broadcasted. If there are no tags with classification information in the received broadcast signals, then one or more folders, e.g., news folder, comprising one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with one or more television stations, e.g., CNN™, may be displayed on the entertainment unit according to a base set.

Each folder, e.g., news folder, may comprise one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with the classification of that folder, e.g., news folder. That is, each folder, e.g., news folder, may comprise one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations, e.g., CNN™, that air television programs that are classified within the same classification of the folder, e.g., news folder. The indications, e.g., icons, of television stations in the same classification as the folder,

e.g., news folder, may be displayed on the entertainment unit upon the viewer of the entertainment unit selecting that folder.

If, however, there are tags with classification information in the received broadcast signals, then the tags may be compared with a list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations stored in a storage unit. In another embodiment, the list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations may be stored in a database. The database may be coupled to the entertainment unit such as via a network, e.g., LAN, WAN.

A determination may then be made as to whether there is a difference between the list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations and the tags. If there is no difference, then one or more folders comprising one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with one or more television stations may be displayed on the entertainment unit according to the base set.

If, however, there is a difference between the list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations and the tags, then the list may be updated. The updated list may then become the base set list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations. One or more folders comprising one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations may then be displayed on the entertainment unit according to the updated base set.

Upon displaying one or more folders, e.g., news folder, according to the base set or updated base set, a determination may be made as to whether the entertainment unit received an input to add or delete a particular folder to be displayed or withdrawn from the display of the entertainment unit, respectively, by the viewer of the entertainment unit. If the entertainment unit received an input to add or delete a

particular folder to be displayed or withdrawn from the display, respectively, then a particular folder may be added or deleted .

5 If the entertainment unit did not receive an input to add or delete a particular folder to be displayed or withdrawn from the display, respectively, then a determination may be made as to whether the entertainment unit received an input to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, associated with a particular classification, e.g., news, sports, soap operas, travel, cartoons, movies, of a particular folder. If the entertainment unit received an input to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, to be displayed or withdrawn from the display of the
10 entertainment unit, respectively, then a particular indication, e.g., icon, may be added or deleted.

If the entertainment unit did not receive an input to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, to be displayed or withdrawn from the display, respectively, then the current display of one or more folders and/or one or more indications, e.g.,
15 icons, may continue.

Upon adding or deleting a particular folder or a particular indication, e.g., icon, or continuing to display the current display of one or more folders and/or one or more indications, e.g., icons, a determination may be made as to whether the entertainment unit received an input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNNTM, associated with a particular classification, e.g., news, of a particular folder, e.g., news folder. If the entertainment unit received an input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNNTM, from the viewer of the entertainment unit, then the television station, e.g., CNNTM, associated with the selected indication, e.g., icon of CNNTM, may be displayed.
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25 If the entertainment unit did not receive an input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNNTM, from the viewer of the entertainment unit, then the

entertainment unit may again determine if the received broadcast signals include tags with classification information, i.e., the classifications associated with each of the television stations broadcasted, in order to determine if the classifications for the television stations have changed. Tags may be inserted in an analog or digital broadcast signal periodically, e.g., approximately every three seconds, or continuously in the broadcast signal. Subsequently, the display of the folders and/or indications may have to be updated as explained above as the classifications for the television stations may change. For example, a television station may air a movie from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and the news from 10:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Subsequently, the indication, e.g., icon, associated with that television station may be moved from one folder to another.

In one embodiment of the present invention, a method for identifying television stations of interest based on content specified by the viewer of the entertainment unit may comprise the step of the entertainment unit receiving broadcast signals that include tags where the tags may comprise content information associated with television programs currently airing on the television stations broadcasted. In one embodiment, the content information may be in the form of keywords. For example, a football game featuring the University of Michigan Wolverines may be associated with the keywords "University of Michigan." These keywords may be stored in a storage unit or in a database coupled to the entertainment unit via a network, e.g., LAN, WAN, or in any other type of storage device.

Upon the entertainment unit receiving input, e.g., "University of Michigan", to identify one or more television stations that are currently airing television programs with matching content inputted from the viewer of the entertainment unit, a comparison may then be made between the content information stored in the storage device and the input received from the viewer of the entertainment unit.

A determination may then be made as to whether there is a match between the input received from the viewer of the entertainment unit and the content information stored in the storage device. If there is not a match, then a notification may be displayed on the entertainment unit indicating that the input received was not identified in any content of the television programs currently airing.

If there is a match, then one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with one or more television stations airing television programs whose content matched the input received from the viewer of the entertainment unit may be displayed on the entertainment unit. In one embodiment, a profile associated with each indication, e.g., icon, may be displayed on the entertainment unit providing further detailed information, e.g., football game, movie, about the television program currently airing on the television station associated with the indication. By learning further detailed information about the television program currently airing on the television station associated with the indication, the viewer may then decide whether to view that television program.

The entertainment unit may then receive input from the viewer to select a particular indication, e.g., icon, associated with a particular television station. The television station, e.g., CNN™, associated with the selected indication, e.g., icon of CNN™, may subsequently be displayed on the entertainment unit.

The foregoing has outlined rather broadly the features and technical advantages of one or more embodiments of the present invention in order that the detailed description of the invention that follows may be better understood. Additional features and advantages of the invention will be described hereinafter which form the subject of the claims of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A better understanding of the present invention can be obtained when the following detailed description is considered in conjunction with the following drawings, in which:

5 Figure 1 illustrates a broadcast distribution network configured in accordance with the present invention;

 Figure 2 illustrates an embodiment of an entertainment unit configured in accordance with the present inventive principles;

10 Figure 3 is a flowchart of a method for efficiently identifying television stations in a user-friendly environment in accordance with the present invention;

 Figure 4 illustrates displaying a folder comprising an indication associated with a television station displayed on a display of an entertainment unit in accordance with the present invention; and

15 Figure 5 is a flowchart of method for identifying television stations of interest based on content specified by a viewer of entertainment unit.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONFigure 1 – Broadcast Distribution Network

Figure 1 illustrates an embodiment of a broadcast distribution network 100 in accordance with the present invention. Broadcast distribution network 100 may comprise an entertainment unit 101 configured to retrieve and display broadcast signals. Entertainment unit 101 may further be configured to display folders comprising indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations as described in greater detail in Figures 3-4. Entertainment unit 101 may further be configured to efficiently identify television stations of interest based on content specified by the viewer of entertainment unit 101 as described in greater detail in Figure 5. A more detailed description of entertainment unit 101 is provided in Figure 2.

Referring to Figure 1, entertainment unit 101 may be coupled to a telephone service provider 102 and thereby access broadcast signals from information sources 103, e.g., broadcast networks 104, web sites 105, local affiliate 106, cable provider 107, via a multimedia provider 108. In other embodiments, entertainment unit 101 may access multimedia provider 108 over other communications links (not shown), bypassing local communication service providers. Faster communication links such as fiber optics, coaxial cable or radio frequency (wireless) links such as a cellular telephone would provide an equally acceptable communication link for the present invention. One skilled in the art may appreciate the many different communication links, which may be utilized to provide the communication path discussed herein, and the communication links discussed herein should not be construed in a limiting manner.

Entertainment unit 101 may further be configured to receive broadcast signals directly from cable provider 107 or broadcast network 109. Typically, a local cable provider 107 receives a signal from a broadcast network 109 and may distribute the signal to a residential dwelling having a cable television converter 110 via a

hardwired cable 111. In this manner, entertainment unit 101 may receive broadcast signals from cable provider 107. In another embodiment, cable television converter 110 may reside outside entertainment unit 101 such as in a set-top box. Entertainment unit 101 may further receive broadcast signals from broadcast network 109 by a television tuner card 112 receiving broadcast signals through an antenna system depicted by broadcast antenna 113 and receiver antenna 114. In another embodiment, television tuner card 112 may be implemented in software. It is further noted that entertainment unit 101 may be configured to receive broadcast signals using other means, e.g., direct broadcast satellite, and that Figure 1 is illustrative. It is further noted that other means for receiving broadcast signals would be recognized by an artisan of ordinary skill in the art and that such embodiments employing such means would fall within the scope of the present invention.

The development of computerized information distribution and interconnected computers allow users to link with other computer networks, and retrieve vast amounts of electronic information heretofore unavailable in an electronic medium. Such electronic information increasingly displaces more conventional techniques of information transmission, such as newspapers and magazines. The term "Internet" may refer to a collection of computer networks interconnected over communication links that utilize standard protocols well known in the art of computer networking.

A basic computer network, including the Internet, typically utilizes a client/server architecture. A "client" may refer to a computer that accesses shared network resources provided by another computer commonly referred to as a server.

A "server" may typically be a remote computer system accessible over a communications medium such as the Internet. The server may scan and search for information sources. Based upon information requested by the user, the server may provide video transmission, e.g., streaming video, to the user. Referring to Figure 1, entertainment unit 101 may be a client which is capable of receiving information such

as broadcast signals. Broadcast signals may be provided by broadcast networks 104, web sites 105, local affiliates 106 and local cable provider 107. However, as would be recognized by those of ordinary skill, the principles of the present invention as discussed hereinbelow are not restricted by a particular signal source.

5 Figure 2 – Entertainment Unit

Figure 2 illustrates a typical hardware configuration of entertainment unit 101 which is representative of a hardware environment for practicing the present invention. Entertainment unit 101 may employ a peripheral component interconnect (PCI) local bus architecture. Although the depicted example employs a PCI bus, other bus architectures such as Accelerated Graphics Port (AGP) and Industry Standard Architecture (ISA) may be used. Processor 201 and main memory 206, e.g., Random Access Memory (RAM), may be connected to PCI local bus 231 through north bridge 232. North bridge 232 may also include an integrated memory controller and cache memory (not shown in FIGURE 2) for processor 201. Furthermore, an operating system 203 may run on processor 201 to provide control and coordinate the functions of the various components of Figure 2. An application 204 in accordance with the principles of the present invention may run in conjunction with operation system 203 which may provide services to application 204, for example, handling keystrokes, etc., as would be appreciated by one skilled in the art. Application 204 may include for example, a program for displaying folders comprising indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations as described in conjunction with Figures 3-4; a program for efficiently identifying television stations of interest based on content specified by the viewer of entertainment unit 101 as described in conjunction with Figure 5; speech recognition software. It should be noted that software components including operating system 203 and application 204 may be loaded into system's main memory 206.

Referring to Figure 2, additional components coupled to PCI bus 231 may be made through direct component interconnection or through add-in boards. In the depicted example, Small Computer System Interface (SCSI) host bus adapter 233 may be connected to PCI local bus 231 by direct component connection. SCSI adapter 233 may be coupled to storage unit 207, e.g., disk drive. Storage unit 207 may be configured to store a list of television stations, e.g., ESPN™, along with their associated classifications, e.g., sports, that may be updated as well as the content of the television programs currently airing on these television stations as described in greater detail in conjunction with Figure 5. It is noted that there are other means for storing a list of television stations, e.g., ESPN™, along with associated information, e.g., classifications, content, such as a database (not shown) coupled to entertainment unit 101 and that such means would be recognized by a person of ordinary skill. It is further noted that embodiments employing such means would fall within the scope of the present invention. It is further noted that the program of the present invention that displays folders comprising indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations on display 216 as described in conjunction with Figures 3-4 may reside in storage unit 207 or in application 204. It is further noted that the program of the present invention that efficiently identifies television stations of interest based on content specified by the viewer of entertainment unit 101 as described in conjunction with Figure 5 may reside in storage unit 207 or in application 204. It is further noted that speech recognition software may reside in storage unit 207 or in application 204.

Furthermore, south bridge 234 may be connected to PCI local bus 231 by direct component connection. South bridge 234 may provide a connection for a tuner card 112 and cable television converter 110. Tuner card 112 may be configured to receive television broadcast signals. In another embodiment, tuner card 112 may be implemented in software that may reside in application 204 or in storage unit 207. Cable television converter 110 may be configured to receive television broadcast

signals. In another embodiment, cable television converter 110 may be implemented in software that may reside in application 204 or in storage unit 207.

South bridge 234 may further be connected to an Infrared (IR) controller 218. IR controller 218 may be a dedicated controller configured for processing an infrared code received by an IR receiver 219 and for capturing the same as data. IR receiver 219 may receive an infrared code from a remote control 220 accessed by the viewer of entertainment unit 101.

South bridge 234 may further be connected to Input/Output (I/O) devices via a user interface adapter 211 and a display adapter 212. Keyboard 215, mouse 214, speaker 215 and microphone 217 may be interconnected to south bridge 234 through user interface adapter 211. Event data may be inputted to entertainment unit 101 through any of these devices. A display monitor 216 may be connected to south bridge 234 by display adapter 212. Display monitor 216 may be configured to display broadcast signals received by entertainment unit 101. Display monitor 216 may further be configured to display folders comprising indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations as described in conjunction with Figures 3-4. Display monitor 216 may further be configured to display indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations currently airing television programs based on content specified by the viewer of entertainment unit 101 as described in conjunction with Figure 5. In this manner, a viewer of entertainment unit 101 may be capable of inputting to entertainment unit 101 through keyboard 213, mouse 214, microphone 217 or remote control 220 and receiving output from entertainment unit 101 via display 216 or speaker 215.

Referring to Figure 2, network interface controller 210 may be connected to PCI local bus 231 by direct component connection. Network interface controller 210 may interconnect PCI local bus 231 with an outside network enabling entertainment unit 101 to communicate with a server (not shown) to receive broadcast signals as

described above via a Local Area Network (LAN), e.g., Ethernet, Token Ring, ARCnet, or a Wide Area Network (WAN), e.g., Internet.

Implementations of the invention include implementations as a unit programmed to execute the method or methods described herein, and as a computer program product. According to implementations, sets of instructions for executing the method or methods are resident in random access memory 206 of one or more units configured generally as described above. Until required by entertainment unit 101, the set of instructions may be stored as a computer program product in another memory unit, for example, in storage unit 207 (which may include a removable memory such as an optical disk or floppy disk for eventual use in storage unit 207). Furthermore, the computer program product may also be stored at another unit and transmitted when desired to entertainment unit 101 by a network or by an external network such as the Internet. One skilled in the art would appreciate that the physical storage of the sets of instructions physically changes the medium upon which it is stored so that the medium carries computer readable information. The change may be electrical, magnetic, chemical or some other physical change.

Figure 3 – Method for Identifying Television Stations in a User Friendly Environment

Figure 3 is a flowchart of one embodiment of the present invention of a method 300 for identifying television stations in a user-friendly environment. As stated in the Background Information section, channel surfing may be avoided if the television viewer recalls the particular channel(s) airing the programs of interest. For example, suppose a television viewer desires to watch the news. Under the current technology, the television viewer may have to sequentially view each channel to find a station airing news or else recall the particular television channels that air news programs. However, the television viewer may not be able to recall which particular television channels air news programs. Furthermore, the television viewer may not know or be able to recall which television channels air news programs at the

particular time of day the user desires to watch the news. Furthermore, the television viewer may not know if unscheduled news programs are airing. Subsequently, the television viewer's search for particular channels airing programs of interests may be inefficient and time consuming. It would therefore be desirable for the television viewer to efficiently identify television stations of interest in a user-friendly environment. Method 300 is a method for efficiently identifying television stations of interest. Method 500, as discussed in Figure 5, is a method for efficiently identifying television stations of interest based on content specified by the viewer of entertainment unit 101.

Referring to Figure 3, in step 301, entertainment unit 101 (Figure 2) may receive broadcast signals. As discussed above in conjunction with Figures 1 and 2, entertainment unit 101 may be configured to receive a broadcast signal from a broadcast network 109 by a tuner 112, that may be embodied in hardware or software, receiving the broadcast signal through an antenna system depicted by broadcast antenna 113 and receiver antenna 114. Entertainment unit 101 may further be configured to receive a multiplicity of broadcast signals from cable provider 107 by cable television converter 110, that may be embodied in hardware or software, receiving the broadcast signal through hardwired cable 111. Entertainment unit 101 may further be configured to receive a multiplicity of broadcast signals from multimedia provider 108 via telephone service provider 102. Multimedia provider 108 may be configured to provide broadcast signals from a variety of information sources 103, e.g., broadcast networks 104, web sites 105, local affiliate 106, cable provider 107. It is noted that entertainment unit 101 may be configured to receive broadcast signals using other means recognized by an artisan of ordinary skill in the art and that such embodiments employing such means would fall within the scope of the present invention.

The broadcast signals may include tags for identifying a classification associated with each of the television stations broadcasted. A classification may refer

to the type of broadcast, e.g., news, sports, soap operas, travel, cartoons, movies, etc., being broadcasted by that television station. In one embodiment, tags may further comprise content information associated with the television programs currently airing on the television stations broadcasted. A description of identifying television stations of interest based on the content of the television programs currently airing is provided in Figure 5.

In one embodiment, tags may be superimposed with the analog broadcast signals by inserting tags periodically, e.g., approximately every three seconds, or continuously in the vertical blanking interval of the signal or in either the audio or live video stream. It is noted there are numerous means of superimposing tags with analog broadcast signals and that such means would be recognized by an artisan of ordinary skill in the art. It is further noted that embodiments employing such means would fall within the scope of the present invention.

In one embodiment, tags may be periodically, e.g., approximately every three seconds, or continuously inserted in the digital broadcast signals associated with the particular video and audio data stream. It is noted there are numerous means of inserting tags in the digital broadcast signals and that such means would be recognized by an artisan of ordinary skill in the art. It is further noted that embodiments employing such means would fall within the scope of the present invention.

In one embodiment, the tags may be inserted in the analog broadcast signals by broadcaster 109. In another embodiment, the tags may be inserted in the analog or digital broadcast signals by local cable provider 107. In another embodiment, the tags may be inserted in the analog or digital broadcast signals by multimedia provider 108. It is noted that the tags may be inserted in the analog or digital broadcast signals by other entities not shown and that the above description is illustrative.

In step 302, a determination may be made as to whether the received broadcast signals include tags with classification information, i.e., the classifications associated with each of the television stations broadcasted. If there are no tags with classification information in the received broadcast signals, then one or more folders comprising one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with one or more television stations may be displayed on display 216 (Figure 2) according to the base set in step 303 as illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4 illustrates an embodiment of the present invention of displaying one or more folders comprising one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with one or more television stations displayed on display 216. Referring to Figure 4, one or more folders 401A-D associated with one or more classifications, e.g., news, sports, soap operas, travel, cartoons, movies, may be displayed on display 216. Folders 401A-D may collectively or individually be referred to as folders 401 or folder 401, respectively. Each folder may be associated with a particular classification. For example, folder 401A may be associated with news. Folder 401B may be associated with sports. Folder 401C may be a folder 401 created by the viewer of entertainment unit 101 as discussed further below. Folder 401D may be associated with movies. It is noted that any number of folders 401 may be displayed on display 216 and that Figure 4 is illustrative.

Each folder 401 may comprise one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with the classification of that folder 401. That is, each folder 401 may comprise one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations that air television programs that are classified within the same classification of folder 401. These indications, e.g., icons, may be displayed on display 216 upon the viewer of entertainment unit 101 selecting folder 401 as illustrated by arrow 403. In one embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may select a particular folder 401 to view the indication(s) of television stations in the same classification as folder 401 by selecting mouse 214 when the cursor rests on folder 401. In another embodiment,

the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may select a particular folder 401 to view the indication(s) of television stations in the same classification as folder 401 via remote control 220 (Figure 2). For example, folder 401A associated with news may be selected to display one or more indications of television stations that air news such as CNN™ 402A, CNN Headline News™ 402B, MSNBC™ 402C and Fox News™ 402D. It is noted that each folder 401 may comprise any number of indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations and that Figure 4 is illustrative.

Referring to step 302 of Figure 3, if there are tags with classification information in the received broadcast signals, then tags may be compared, in step 304, with a list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations stored in storage unit 207 (Figure 2). In another embodiment, the list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations may be stored in a database. The database may be coupled to entertainment unit 101 such as via a network, e.g., LAN, WAN.

A determination may then be made as to whether there is a difference between the list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations and the tags in step 305. If there is no difference, then one or more folders comprising one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with one or more television stations may be displayed on display 216 according to the base set in step 303.

If there is a difference between the list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations and the tags, then the list may be updated in step 306. The updated list may then become the base set list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations.

In step 307, one or more folders 401 comprising one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with television stations may be displayed on display 216 as illustrated in Figure 4 according to the updated base set.

In step 308, a determination may be made as to whether entertainment unit 101 received an input to add or delete a particular folder 401 to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, by the viewer of entertainment unit 101. In one embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to add or delete a particular folder 401 to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, via speech. That is, the viewer may verbally communicate to add or delete a particular folder 401 where the verbal communications may be received by microphone 217 and recognized by speech recognition software stored in storage unit 207 (Figure 2) or in application 204 (Figure 2). In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to add or delete a particular folder 401 to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, via keyboard 215. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to add or delete a particular folder 401 to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, via remote control 220. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to add or delete a particular folder 401 to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, via mouse 215. It is noted there are numerous means of the viewer inputting to entertainment unit 101 to add or delete a particular folder 401 to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216 and that such means would be recognized by an artisan of ordinary skill in the art. It is further noted that embodiments employing such means would fall within the scope of the present invention.

If entertainment unit 101 received an input to add or delete a particular folder 401 to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, from the viewer of entertainment unit 101, then a particular folder 401 may be added or deleted in step 309.

If entertainment unit 101 did not receive an input to add or delete a particular folder 401 to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, from the viewer of entertainment unit 101, then, in step 310, a determination may be made as to whether entertainment unit 101 received an input to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, associated with a particular classification, e.g., news, sports, soap operas, travel, cartoons, movies, of a particular folder 401. In one embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, via speech. That is, the viewer may verbally communicate to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, where the verbal communications may be received by microphone 217 and recognized by speech recognition software stored in storage unit 207 or in application 204. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, via keyboard 215. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, via remote control 220. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, via mouse 215. It is noted there are numerous means of the viewer inputting to entertainment unit 101 to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216 and that such means would be recognized by an artisan of ordinary skill in the art. It is further noted that embodiments employing such means would fall within the scope of the present invention.

If entertainment unit 101 received an input to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, from the viewer of entertainment unit 101, then a particular indication, e.g., icon, may be added or deleted in step 311.

If entertainment unit 101 did not receive an input to add or delete a particular indication, e.g., icon, to be displayed or withdrawn from display 216, respectively, from the viewer of entertainment unit 101, then the current display of one or more folders and/or one or more indications, e.g., icons, may continue in step 312.

5 A determination may be made in step 313 as to whether entertainment unit 101 received an input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNN™ 402A, associated with a particular classification, e.g., news, of a particular folder 401, e.g., news folder 401A. In one embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNN™ 402A, via speech. That is, 10 the viewer may verbally communicate to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNN™ 402A, where the verbal communications may be received by microphone 217 and recognized by speech recognition software stored in storage unit 207 or in application 204. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNN™ 402A, via keyboard 215. 15 In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNN™ 402A, via remote control 220. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to select a particular indication via mouse 215. It is noted there are numerous means of the viewer inputting to entertainment unit 101 to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of 20 CNN™ 402A, and that such means would be recognized by an artisan of ordinary skill in the art. It is further noted that embodiments employing such means would fall within the scope of the present invention.

25 If entertainment unit 101 received an input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNN™ 402A, from the viewer of entertainment unit 101, then, in step 314, the television station, e.g., CNN™, associated with the selected indication, e.g., icon of CNN™ 402A, may be displayed on display 216.

If entertainment unit 101 did not receive an input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNN™ 402A, from the viewer of entertainment unit 101, then, in step 302, entertainment unit 101 may again determine if the received broadcast signals include tags with classification information, i.e., the classifications associated with each of the television stations broadcasted, in order to determine if the classifications for the television stations have changed. As stated above, tags may be inserted in the analog or digital broadcast signals periodically, e.g., approximately every three seconds, or continuously in the broadcast signals. Subsequently, the display of folders 401 and/or indications may have to be updated as explained in steps 304-306 as the classifications for the television stations may change. For example, a television station may air a movie from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and the news from 10:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Subsequently, the indication, e.g., icon, associated with that television station may be moved from one folder 401 to another. It is further noted that in one embodiment when entertainment unit 101 is deactivated, tuner 112, whether embodied in hardware or software, may be configured to continue to receive tags. These tags may then be compared with the base set list of one or more classifications associated with one or more television stations to determine if the base set list needs to be updated.

It is noted that method 300 may be executed in a different order presented and that the order presented in the discussion of Figure 3 is illustrative. It is further noted that certain steps may be executed almost concurrently.

Figure 5 – Method for Efficiently Identifying Television Stations of Interest Based on Content Specified by the Viewer of the Entertainment Unit

Figure 5 is a flowchart of one embodiment of the present invention of a method 500 for identifying television stations of interest based on content specified by the viewer of entertainment unit 101.

In step 501, entertainment unit 101 (Figure 2) may receive broadcast signals incorporated with tags where the tags may comprise content information associated with television programs currently airing on the television stations broadcasted. In one embodiment, the content information may be in the form of keywords. For example, a football game featuring the University of Michigan Wolverines may be associated with the keywords "University of Michigan." These keywords may be stored in storage unit 207 or in a database coupled to entertainment unit 101 via a network, e.g., LAN, WAN, or in any other type of storage device.

In step 502, entertainment unit 101 may receive input, e.g., "University of Michigan", to identify one or more television stations that are currently airing television programs with matching content inputted by the viewer of entertainment unit 101. As stated above, the tags inserted in the broadcast signals may comprise content associated with television programs currently airing in the form of keywords that may be stored in a storage device, e.g., storage unit 207. In one embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input keywords to be searched in the storage device via speech. That is, the viewer may verbally communicate keywords that may be received by microphone 217 and recognized by speech recognition software stored in storage unit 207 or in application 204. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input keywords to be searched in the storage device via keyboard 215. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input keywords to be searched in the storage device via remote control 220. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input keywords to be searched in the storage device via mouse 215. It is noted there are numerous means of the viewer inputting keywords to be searched in a storage device, e.g., storage unit 207, and that such means would be recognized by an artisan of ordinary skill in the art. It is further noted that embodiments employing such means would fall within the scope of the present invention.

In step 503, a comparison may be made between the content information stored in the storage device, e.g., storage unit 207, and the input received from the viewer of entertainment unit 101.

5 In step 504, a determination may be made as to whether there is a match between the input received from the viewer of entertainment unit 101 and the content information stored in the storage device, e.g., storage unit 207. If there is not a match, then a notification that input received in step 502 was not identified in any content of the television programs currently airing may be displayed on display 216 in step 505.

10 If there is a match, then one or more indications, e.g., icons, associated with one or more television stations airing television programs whose content matched the input received from the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may be displayed on display 216 in step 506. In one embodiment, a profile associated with each indication, e.g., icon, may be displayed on display 216 providing further detailed information, e.g.,
15 football game, movie, about the television program currently airing on the television station associated with the indication. By learning further detailed information about the television program currently airing on the television station associated with the indication, the viewer may then decide whether to view that television program.

20 In step 507, entertainment unit 101 may receive input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon, associated with a particular television station from a viewer of entertainment unit 101. In one embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNNTM 402A, via speech. That is, the viewer may verbally communicate to select a particular indication where the verbal communications may be received by microphone 217 and recognized by
25 speech recognition software stored in storage unit 207 or in application 204. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to select a particular indication via keyboard 215. In another embodiment, the viewer of

entertainment unit 101 may input to select a particular indication via remote control 220. In another embodiment, the viewer of entertainment unit 101 may input to select a particular indication via mouse 215. It is noted there are numerous means of the viewer inputting to entertainment unit 101 to select a particular indication, e.g., icon of CNN™ 402A, and that such means would be recognized by an artisan of ordinary skill in the art. It is further noted that embodiments employing such means would fall within the scope of the present invention.

In step 508, the television station, e.g., CNN™, associated with the selected indication, e.g., icon of CNN™ 402A, may be displayed on display 216.

It is noted that method 500 may be executed in a different order presented and that the order presented in the discussion of Figure 5 is illustrative. It is further noted that certain steps in method 500 may be executed almost concurrently.

Although the system, method and computer program product are described in connection with several embodiments, it is not intended to be limited to the specific forms set forth herein, but on the contrary, it is intended to cover such alternatives, modifications and equivalents, as can be reasonably included within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims. It is noted that the headings are used only for organizational purposes and not meant to limit the scope of the description or claims.